Title: Need to allocate funds to Tamil Nadu Agricultural University for establishing a national level research institute exclusively for "Drumstick" (Moringa Tinctoria).

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (PALANI): The 'Drumstic', Botanically named "MORINGA OLEIFERA" a perennial vegetable crop widely cultivated in Erode, Karur, Dindigul, Namakkal, Coimbatore, Trichy, Theni and Madurai Districts, in Tamil Nadu. The area under cultivation of MORINGA in Tamil Nadu state is 6154 hectares with a production of 3.08 lakh tones with an average productivity of 50 tones per hectare. This crop mostly cultivated by marginal farmers and whole MORINGA is marketed through Oddanchatram vegetable market and transported to all the districts of Tamil Nadu and other states.

It is commercially exploited in preparation of certain food products like pickles, canned vegetable, dry pulp powder, dry fruit (as bits) and pulp paste etc. In addition, it has industrial value on extraction of vegetable oil called as been oil extracted from its seed. The Moringa seed has immense value in electronic industry. Recently, production of moringa seed oil as biofuel is also gaining momentum. The bark and roots of moringa tree has got medicinal value and hence it is also mentioned as Karpakaviruksha.

In order to find solutions to production problems and commercialization of moringa crop in various industries like food processing, vegetable oil extraction and biofuel production, a scientific approach through research trials on moringa needs special attention. In this context establishment of a separate National level Research station for moringa will help to evolve new variety.

In my Palani constituency, Mulanur in Dharapuram Taluk is a Moringa belt.

Hence, I urge upon the Government of India to allocate necessary funds to Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Coimbatore to establish a National Level Research Institute for Moringa in Mulanur in my Palani Constituency and to develop this vegetable crop.